THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE OF A JEWISH STATE

BY

A. A. BERLE, A.M., D.D.

DS
149
.B4
1918

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
MAY 27 1919
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

DS 149 .B4 1918
Berle, A. A. 1866-1960.
The world significance of a
Jewish state

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE OF A JEWISH STATE

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE OF A JEWISH STATE

LIBRARY OF PRINCETON
MAY 27 1919
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BY

A. A. BERLE, A.M., D.D.

AUTHOR OF "CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL RAGE,"
"THE SCHOOL IN THE HOME," "TEACHING IN THE HOME," ETC.

FORMER PROFESSOR OF APPLIED CHRISTIANITY IN TUFTS COLLEGE

NEW YORK
MITCHELL KENNERLEY
MCMXVIII

COPYRIGHT 1918 BY
MITCHELL KENNERLEY

PRINTED IN AMERICA

TO

LOUIS D. BRANDEIS

ASSOCIATE JUSTICE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

EXEMPLAR AND LEADER OF THE LIBERATING INFLUENCE
OF THE JEW IN AMERICAN LIFE

WITH MEMORIES OF OUR STRUGGLES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

https://archive.org/details/worldsignificanc00berl

FOREWORD

IT is many years since the author of this little essay became interested in the subject of which it treats. The Zionist movement, as such, has interest chiefly for Jews. But the history of the Jews is a human possession, priceless because of its influence upon the moral and religious conceptions of men. This essay does not treat of the Zionist movement, as such, but considers the proposed Jewish state for its significance to the Christian world.

The Jew himself is a social factor of such importance to the world that his racial and national interests are world-interests *per se;* and whatever tends to unify the Jews, especially religiously, and centre their thought and action in a solidarity, religious and social, in a concrete form representative of the highest and finest aspirations of the race, is a sublime subject for speculation. And when there appears on the horizon a possi-

bility that this speculative centre of Jewish interests may become a practical reality, we may well take note of it for the sake of the whole world. That is what this essay attempts to do.

The present writer can think of no greater contribution to the world's life than the religious rehabilitation and unification of the Jews. And because a Jewish state looks like the best instrument to this end, the subject becomes commanding. I look to the Christian world to supplement, with generous enthusiasm, this national aspiration of devoted Jews, that Americans may join with Englishmen, some of whose leading statesmen are already committed to the plan, in bringing their influence to bear upon our own government, toward the fulfilment of so worthy an international end.

A. A. B.

Boston, February, 1918.

THE WORLD SIGNIFICANCE OF A JEWISH STATE

THE outstanding fact about the great war which has now raged throughout the civilized world for three years has been the element of surprise. It has seemed as though nothing had developed according to the previous expectations or according to previous modes of reasoning. The most astonishing developments have succeeded one another with a swiftness and variety which, if we had read of them before the war, in some imaginative publication, would have caused contemptuous scepticism. The mobilization of the brains of the world, for the purpose of slaughter, has been an astounding exhibit, not only of what the mobilization of the brains of the world could do, but of what strange and uncanny combinations have resulted. There is hardly a field where the weirdness of the results is not entirely equal to the skill and ingenuity which produced them.

This is seen, for example, in the unusual combinations of nations for war, quite irrespective of their religious interests or affiliations. For years civilization has protested against the rule or misrule of the Turk. Yet the Turk to-day is allied with the Central Empires, especially under the hegemony of that Germany which we have hitherto regarded as the safeguard and foundation of efficient and stable Protestantism in Europe. So, on the other side, there is arrayed a congeries of religions, covering almost everything from Ultramontane Roman Catholicism to the varieties of religion in India and Japan. Nothing could more clearly illustrate the fact that to-day religion and religious opinions have absolutely nothing to do with foreign policy or the alliances of nations. Yet there is not a statesman in Europe, or America for that matter, who can venture a single word on the subject of domestic organized religion of any sort, who would not at that moment endanger his influence or risk his political life.

That school of observers who have professed to see a "deep religious awakening"

going on, will have to define their meaning more clearly. If by "deep religious awakening" they mean increasing seriousness in the world, in the presence of facts of monumental iniquity and stupidity, colossal waste and slaughter, heartrending narratives of misery, shame, and pain, then indeed there has been a "religious" awakening. It would be a curious world that did not become serious in the presence of what we have witnessed in the last three years. But if they mean that any distinction of creed or belief has become clearer, more decisive, and more controlling and effective morally, they are mistaken, with one possible exception. And the exception is that one which has always impressed the world, and which has made the Jew the barometer of civilization at all times. Neither Protestantism nor Catholicism has shown the slightest power to control, or even direct, the moral order of the world. Christianity not only could not control the outbreak of the war, but has not been able to do a single thing toward mitigating its worst effects, even the Red Cross having become now, in

warring countries, a military adjunct of the armies.

The possible exception has been the Jew. For many years the Jewish national ideal has been gaining in force and articulateness. To-day it is within the region of practical politics, and may become a reality at the close of the war. Looked upon by many as a silly or idle dream for years, there is now something resembling a strong probability that there will arise in Palestine a Jewish state under the protectorate of the great powers, or some of them, which will have a significance to the world far beyond, probably, what even its most ardent advocates dream. That it should fire the imagination of every Jew who values his blood and traditions to see a future Land of Promise actually erected, with Jerusalem as its capital, should go without saying. It is one of the curious facts of the matter, however, that there are large numbers of Jews who do not feel the wonderful inspiration of the theme. But, by and large, it may be said that the Zionist movement is simply regarded by these Jews as a colonization

scheme, which decidedly it is not, though it contemplates filling Palestine with Jews; and they have not informed themselves about the vast implications of the programme. But the Jews of the world at large have gained in national articulateness and cohesion, and thereby in moral force and power, as have no other religionists in the world. To be sure, their local interests, like those of the rest of the world, are bound up in the results of the war. But, above and beyond those local interests, distributed among the nations of the world at war, they have erected into the foreground of their consciousness another hope and ideal, which has solidified, stimulated, and animated them beyond anything which has for generations stirred the Jewish community throughout the world, namely, the hope of seeing a Jewish state, free, self-governing, and fulfilling an age-long desire and dream of the race.

We may, for the present, leave to the Zionists, and the Jews as a whole, the discussion of what the erection of such a state may or may not mean to them. But there is another significance to the foundation of

such a state, which interests the rest of the world, and in some respects hardly less than the Jews themselves. Would it mean anything, or nothing in particular, to the rest of the world, to have a Jewish social state called into being in Palestine? Would it be, to the rest of the world, just one more "small state" to dicker about, in the councils of the great powers? Would it be just the realization of the dream of a few Jewish enthusiasts and fanatics, to be looked at with kindly tolerance or patronizing friendly interest? It is likely that the vast body of Christians have never thought about this matter at all, considering it purely visionary, and entirely outside the bounds of practical discussion. But, supposing it did come within the sphere of practical disposition,—and the present writer believes that it has,—then what is the significance to the non-Jewish world of such a state, and what would its establishment mean to Christianity and Christian ideas and ideals? These are questions which have for the Gentile world both a political, sentimental, and religious significance. If such a state is established, it will be a

unique commonwealth,—one which admits of political possibilities far beyond anything of which the world has hitherto dreamed, and which may become the political instructor of the entire world. It will be socialized by its very constitution to a degree which would not be possible in any other state. The world will not be able to ignore the results which must ultimately flow from this community, if it develops normally and according to natural expectation. Then again, it will be in custody and control of the land and places out of which the entire Christian religion has emerged. It can hardly fail to have at least a deep sentimental interest to the Christian world that this is the case. The entire Christian church, in its variety of branches, as it teaches its own history and origins, will be compelled, side by side with this instruction, to teach the history and development of the nascent Jewish state. No commonwealth on earth will start with such a propaganda for its exploitation in world thought, or with such eager and minute scrutiny, by millions of people, of its slightest detail. The value of this to such a state can only be conjec-

tured. But that it will give impetus to it, that it will aid it and upbuild it, goes without saying. Think what it would mean to any enterprise to have the millions of Sunday-school children studying about it every Sunday in the year! To have its ideas and ideals expounded in thousands of Christian pulpits, to have its aims and practices discussed from a thousand different angles! Think of the possibilities of religious instruction contained in such an opportunity! If this House of Israel is reëstablished in Palestine again, it will begin with an opportunity of world instruction in the religion of Israel which has never been vouchsafed to any other cult in the history of mankind! One of the very first and important results of all this will be, that the religion of Israel will be understood—and what may not that mean both for Israel and for Christendom—and therein lies a possibility of modification of the religion of the whole world! If no single other result were to be looked for, this itself would be a sufficient reason for the enlistment of all Christendom in the work of securing Palestine for the Jews, and the

building up therein, on a secure foundation, a Jewish state. But this is but a mere glimpse of the vast possibilities contained in this matter. Enough, however, has been indicated to outline the discussion which follows.

I

Let us then, first, ask ourselves what the political significance of a Jewish state will be. Those who have not made the matter one of special study, do not realize the economic resources for self-dependence of Palestine; and it is not the purpose to discuss that phase of the matter here, except to state that those resources are there, and that, once established, there is no reason to fear that there will not be an inflow of Jewish settlers who will make the fullest use of those possibilities. In addition to this, it is unthinkable that the vast resources of the Jews throughout the world will not supply all the necessary credits and assistance, to supply all initial needs, till the period of stable and self-sustaining strength is reached. For, be it understood, the Zionist movement does not contemplate that every Jew everywhere will immediately pick up and leave his present interests and occupation, and hasten to the

Holy Land! But the fact is that there are vast numbers to whom such a change of base will be an economic advantage of sufficient promise and possibility to make it reasonably sure that population will not be wanting. And for the needs of that population, in the early stages of its expansion and growth, the economic resources of the Jews of the world will undoubtedly be ready. That matter may safely be left where the burden will rest.

But when we turn to the political possibilities, especially to the remainder of the world, we have a vista opening to us which ought to awaken the greatest enthusiasm throughout the Christian world. Let us suppose that the end of the war will leave the world much freer than it has ever been before, and that all militarists, of every type and shade, will for a long period be relegated to the rear. The poverty of nations, and their great debts, and their war-weariness may well have that result, and the world will be safer for democracy, whether considered as a result of peace negotiations, or merely as an economic result of the great disaster.

But there will still remain one vast contrast, full of consequences to the world, which apparently this war is not appreciably touching; and that is the contrast and competition between the Asiatic and the European civilization. Japan, as the most advanced of Asiatic nations, will emerge from the present war stronger than she has ever been. That she will endeavor to strengthen that hegemony, may be laid down as one of the truisms of political developments in the future. It need not be assumed that such an ambition on the part of Japan is necessarily hostile to the Western world. But it would ignore the tides of nature, or the ambitions of nations, or the fundamental facts of national growth and extension, to overlook this fact. That the militarists will not permit us to overlook it may be taken for granted. But the lovers of world peace should not overlook it either. A powerful Japan, grown rich, not weakened in the present war, having done little or nothing on the side of her allies, and looking steadily, serenely, and almost solely on her own interests and advancement, will endeavor to

extend her influence on the continent. Korea is already gone. Manchuria is a rich prize, almost ready to fall into her lap; the "peaceful penetration" of China, almost as certain, and given powerful impulse lately by the heedless concession, over the protest of China herself, on the part of our own government, that she had "special interests" there. What do all these things portend? At their worst, an ultimate conflict between the Asiatic and the European: at their best, the necessity for the rest of the world to see to it that Japan is kept in order, by some peaceful influence. This is not an exploitation of the Asiatic peril: it is merely a recognition of the fundamental facts of national development, as these are outlined to us by population growth, by economic necessity, and by national ambition. We need not attribute the worst motives to the Japanese. The result is substantially the same, if we attribute to them only those national aspirations which hitherto we have regarded as perfectly justifiable in all the nations of the world. But when the full recuperation of the world has taken place this

is what we shall see: another economically powerful and self-sufficient Asiatic Germany aspiring to control all Asia and proposing Asiatic union, with Japan at its head!

Let us even imagine China, free and strong and grown powerful through internal improvement and development. She will still be an Asiatic power, and insofar her interests will be identical with those of Japan in the contrast between Asiatic and European. Dominated by Japan, she will perhaps present us such a spectacle as is seen in the German domination of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But, whether independently strong, or allied with Japan, the interest of both nations will be Asiatic. The movement for an independent India grows apace, although its utterance is suppressed. Those who imagine that the movement for national utterance and existence in India is simply a feeble desire of a few idealists, do not know its real strength. Military occupation and domination by England may continue many generations still; but it may safely be said that, with the safeguarding of the rights of small nations, and the growth

of the principle of nationality, it is nothing less than foolish to leave out of the reckoning the movement for independence in India. Indeed, why should not India aspire to such independence? There is not a rational reason why this may not be hoped for as among the fruits of the great war for the democratizing of the world. But an independent India will also be an Asiatic power. It also may be dominated by Japanese hegemony. But whether it is, or is not, its interests will be Asiatic and insofar again they will be the same as those of Japan. The smaller states, Persia and the rest, may likewise be included in this category; in a word, the organization of the Asiatic world with Japan, friendly or hostile, at the head. If this seems like a dream, all one needs to do is to study the results in this present war of the education of the East, partly by participation, partly by observation of the methods of the Western world. To imagine that the silent East is not observing, with great intentness, and with a view to its own emergence, the astounding phenomena of the last three years, is to suppose foolishness, like the fool-

ishness that used to prevail about Japan, in days gone by. Let it never be forgotten that, within the memory of men not yet old, Japan was a weak and hardly considered nation alternately bullied and patronized. Nobody bullies or patronizes Japan to-day.

Under these circumstances, what will the world need most? A mediator between East and West! What will such mediation require? It will call for the qualities of both East and West, understanding of both the Asiatic and the European, and the ability to coördinate the two in a conjugation which will make for peace and mutuality. Just let one reflect a moment, and it will appear that there is no race in the world more capable for this task than is the Jewish race. The Jew has become both Oriental and Occidental. His interests have been locally national in every country in the world. He is found to-day in every army in the field! He is found potentially at least in the cabinet of every nation at war! He is found in the councils of state everywhere, and his voice is heard in every economic interest throughout the world! Give him a state,

through which he can speak that universal interest, gifted as he is, by understanding and capacity for interpretation of world interests, through both the Asiatic and the European media, and you have erected a voice for the peace and order of the world which will be more powerful than any League of Nations, and more interpretive than any alliance. For, be it understood that alliances between Asiatic and European nations are futile foolishness, no matter how viewed—they can rest on no permanent interest in the expansion of the Asiatic continent. Asia must expand, and must expand without European domination and exploitation. Japan is already free and powerful. China must become free, and, if free, will become powerful. India will become free, and, if free, will become powerful. If dominated by Japan, in the interest of Japanese imperialism, the combination will be fraught with danger to the world; but, in any case, Asia, free and developing, will present a problem for understanding and interpretation for which special capacity and racial intuitions will be a first necessity. That inter-

pretation will have to come, to be persuasive, from a source which cannot be suspected of selfish interests. It can come from no European power. It can come from no Asiatic power. It can come from a Euro-Asiatic state which has the understanding of both, and which cannot be suspected of selfish interests. Such a state the Jewish State of Palestine would undoubtedly be.

If it be suggested that this little corner of the world would be too weak and unimportant to exercise such a vast place in world history, the reply is, Look what a place in the religion of the world that same little corner of the world has already. If a young Jewish enthusiast who was martyred at the age of thirty-three, could set on fire the imagination of the world, and make his name the greatest name in history, and do it without an army or a navy, or any of the accessories of world power, and make by the power of words, simple words, his name the Name above every name, what may we not reasonably expect of the nation which produced that world figure, restored to the land of its dreams, fired again with its ancient

traditions, putting into active life and being again its ancient laws, and giving to the world a working model of a social state free from the entanglements of the sordid and disgraceful game of diplomacy, and bringing idealism again into the realm of world politics, and by the force of religious devotion, high mentality, and social unity, enforcing it upon the world! We are seeing a little of this possibility, by the action of the Russian dreamers who have upset imperialistic ideas in Europe! It is a hope and a vision, to stir the dullest blood in Christendom! It is justified by the calmest survey of the brutalized world at the present minute. It is justified by the world failures of statesmanship in our present world disaster. A Jewish state would be a "Hague" which could, and which would, command the attention and govern the thought of the world.

Such a state would have instant allies in the thought, the arts, the letters, and the literature of every nation in the world. The Jew not in Palestine would be kept for the high future of his race, by seeing in operation, even if he were not there himself, the

ancient ideals of his fathers; and with the renascence of the Jewish religion throughout the world, visualized in a state exemplifying those ideals, there would be created a body of opinion, instantly, throughout the world, which might well bring in, and keep forever, a universal peace! Who will be bold enough to say that a new race of prophets, like Amos, Hosea, and the rest, may not lead the world to heights of thought and action for world unity and happiness hitherto undreamed of? Why should all this look chimerical, when we remember what has already been hinted,—that, automatically, the whole Christian as well as the whole Jewish world would study minutely, every detail of this state, as soon as it is established? Of course, the Jew may fail. But why should he fail? He never has failed, when the world has given him a fair chance. And with his rationality, and his prophetic tradition, he will set up before the world the prophetic ideal of righteousness, in a state dominated by his law and religion, and that religion itself, at least, a part of the necessary background of Christendom itself! The

political importance of such a state to the world is almost impossible of exaggeration. It is far from being the mere colonization scheme that many persons imagine. In fact it may be the new Messianic Kingdom itself, appearing on the horizon of world politics and betokening the time when the human race shall indeed beat its swords into ploughshares, and its spears into pruning hooks, and learn war no more! One need not be a Jew to welcome such a possibility. One only needs to be broadly and sanely human, to see here one of those new providences by which, possibly, through seas of blood, we have at length been led to the new world of righteousness.

But Christendom, least of all, can doubt such a possibility. To what end have we read the prophets these many centuries? To what end have we admired and loved that masterful group of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos and Hosea, and the rest? For what purpose have we embodied their superb ethical ideas into the commonplaces of the Christian religion? Here they will become the realities of a social state, full-blooded with the fire

and glory of the race, that produced them. Nothing so glorious has dawned for ages upon the horizon of the practical politics of the world. It does not need that we assume that the Jewish state will be a community of angels. We know it will not. It only assumes that the Jewish life throughout the world will approximate to its own religious traditions.

II

Nor can there be any doubt that the establishment of a Jewish state will have great sentimental results, though this designation hardly expresses what we have in mind. Palestine is a land dear to the heart of the whole world. The events which have taken place there are of interest historically, socially, and linguistically, to the world of scholarship whether of history, romance, or literature. One needs to pause but a moment and remember simply the list of battles fought on the Plains of Esdraelon, to recall that the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman Empires have all played a part on this historic soil. One needs but to recall the Eastern Empire, the Crusades, the Saracen, and follow all the way down to Napoleon and even the present moment to feel the immense historic sweep which is gathered in this little fragment of the earth's surface. There is probably no

equal area anywhere in which so much has been enacted, which has a place in the thought and literature of the world. No place probably, upon which so much and such varied scholarship has been expended, and in which further results would arouse world-wide interest and enthusiasm! Hitherto, and especially in the modern world, Turkish control has stopped this development, and held up a stream of natural evolution, which once started to flowing again would have the greatest sentimental, scholastic, and ethical value to the world.

It is also entirely within the possibilities that, when the first economic struggles are over, and the first stages of organization and readjustment have been passed,—for the organization and making of such a state, with the diverse elements of which it necessarily will be composed at the outset, will itself be a work of great difficulty, and calling for the greatest possible skill in statecraft, social education, and leadership,—there will be a revival of the classical Hebrew language and literature since national development almost always follows the lines of language. The

common denominator, linguistically, of the various kinds of Jewish elements which will be gathered, will be Hebrew, and a new blossoming of the Hebrew language will be a great thing for the world, not only for its own sake, and for the better interpretation of the Hebrew scriptures, but hardly less for the recovery of the lost elements of Semitic civilization. We are, as the case now stands, only on the brink of that vast lost world. But the revival of Hebrew culture and language, under the ægis of a Hebrew state, will unquestionably lead, not only to its wider and more sympathetic and skilful study, but contributions will unquestionably be made which cannot but be full of important results to scholarship everywhere. Here again Christian and Hebrew interests will coincide, and world interest will be spontaneous and enthusiastic. Moreover, such a revival will have in it elements, which will do more for the social unification of the world than almost any other single interest, except one still to be mentioned.

A Hebrew state must almost of necessity be governed by its ancient law. That law,

only vaguely understood, and of only very limited application in world history, will have then a full exposition and a thorough working-out in terms of modern life. There have been many of us, who for many years have seen in the Hebrew laws the elements of the social regeneration of the world. Certainly many of the laws relating to the ordinary life and relations of mankind, as laid down in the ancient Mosaic law, if applied to a modern city block, would regenerate it, root and branch. It would have commanding interest to the entire world, to see a state, albeit a small one, work these problems through, and especially a state which could, and which would, call to its aid the finest body, collectively, of intellectual force and discrimination which the world knows. All this is but repeating what the Christian world has been saying about the culture of the Hebrews, as revealed in their own sacred writings for many centuries. A rationalized Hebrew state, founded on Hebrew fundamental laws, ethical, social, sanitary, dietary, and all the rest, would be a working laboratory of social regeneration which would ex-

cite breathless attention. And if, as may reasonably be expected, such a state should exhibit phenomena, in the conservation of human life, in the development of human genius and power, which we may also reasonably expect from the known history of the Jews, the effect upon civilization in general would be something sublime.

Here, again, we shall probably be confronted with the stale suggestion, that all this is mere conjecture and fanciful dreaming. But why should it be? We need only to sum up the achievements of the Jew, under the untoward conditions of his life, as an exotic in Christian civilization, persecuted for a thousand years, and not beyond the boundaries of anti-Semitic hatred and pursuit even yet! Yet if his wonderful contributions to literature, to science, to philology, to music, to the arts, to diplomacy, be only casually tabulated, there is created a presumption, that even on the mere law of averages, there is a fund of genius among the Jews in the world, which has not been uncovered, which will enrich the social and spiritual life of the world immeasurably!

And as stated already, one does not have to be a Jew, to feel all this! One does not have to be a Jew to realize and appreciate its value. One needs only to understand, and to give fair and just recognition to those who have written in these various branches of human endeavor such glorious pages in the world's story.

Take only the science of medicine. It takes no violent stretch of the imagination to see this modern Jewish state, the working model of the finest and highest physical development—far surpassing that of the Greeks in their prime, because that was based only upon selfish considerations while this will have to rest upon moral interests, which make the least of the brethren a member of the national family. Such a state would be a world teacher, par excellence, and one can imagine no finer or nobler hope, for the most gifted members of the race, than that they should cherish as a part of their life-work a contribution of some sort, personal or otherwise, to the realization of this great ideal. We have seen what superb results have been achieved socially by the

great foreign missionary movement of the Christian church, starting as it did, with a mass of impossible narrow theological conceptions, and ending up as it is with an educational and social programme, which makes it one of the amazing accomplishments of humanity, much finer in temper and quality than the work of theological Christianity in the home lands.

But the Jews in a Palestinian state would not be missionaries to the world, but missionaries to each other; builders of an ancient national structure of ideas, laws, and precepts, which, made the basis of the national life, would create new moral types for the world's instruction and advancement. That it would result in the transformation of the Jewish life throughout the entire world, is almost certain, because the reaction from a state which was distinctly the working model of Jewish life and ideals upon the scattered elements of the nation throughout the world, would be both swift and decisive. This, again, would have an equally swift and decisive result in the nations wherein the Jews are in considerable numbers, which is to say,

almost every population-centre in the world. We would thus see the entire scientific, artistic, and social aims of the Jewish race centred for exemplification in the new Jewish state, and the best of all there is in the world, instantly transferred and made available there. Here would be a state which, being at once a social unit, and a racial unit, and a religious unit, would be a field for laboratory work, such as has never before existed! All humanity would be perforce interested in the result, and whatever was thus achieved, would be made available for the enrichment of the world's life.

The Jew has shown himself so versatile in collaboration with the particular nation with which his lot has been thrown, that it is an interesting look forward to conjecture what his art will be, what his education will be, what his science will be, when it is transferred to a field where he has every part of it, filled with the sense of national coöperation and national glory. That the contribution will be something distinctive, and possibly something greater than the world has yet seen is not unreasonable. The arrested

movement of Semitic civilization and culture may then proceed possibly to its full development, only it will be the more glorious for its deferred ripening, and will bring to it elements of cosmopolitanism which were not possible hitherto. What would we not give to have undisturbed the glories of Greece! But here we shall see one of the oldest races of history literally born again. The Gentile world cannot be indifferent to such a chance to see a work, which will bring glory to humanity and a possible release from bondages which have hitherto kept us in the eternal fear which even now drenches the world with blood, and fills the hearts of men with terror. The Greece of Pericles restored on the Acropolis does not begin to furnish the inspiration that is aroused by the thought of Jerusalem restored and glorious again, under the rule of her own sons and resounding once more with the songs of David, and the minstrels of the noblest religious poetry that ever filled the heart of man.

Intimately connected with this vision are certain facts which are peculiarly favorable

for such a development as we have here described. The purpose to build up a Jewish state, on a model hitherto unknown, finds special impetus, in the consideration that it will have a fair, if not indeed a flying, start toward a "social commonwealth," quite unlike anything yet attempted. Palestine has, as yet, escaped that grasp of corporate and exploiting interest, which makes social development difficult and often impossible. There are no vast corporations, no immense "vested interests" to be placated or bought off; there is the virgin undeveloped territory, with railways yet to build, and connections yet to establish with neighboring states and lands, all of which form an unexampled opportunity for experiments *de novo* in state building. Concessions to intending builders could be made on the national plan, and automatically agreeing with the national interest and the public welfare. The industrial expansion, therefore, could be without those weary steps toward freedom which all other industrial civilizations have had to undergo. Almost from the beginning, land and industries, public re-

sources, mineral and otherwise, could be nationally administered, and all this would make a most novel and striking page in statecraft. Once more, as a working model for vast lands as yet undeveloped, in Africa and Asia, the influence of such a state would be very great. Moreover, working thus in contrast to the land-grabbing policies of hitherto unrestrained imperialism, this would be a great service to the nations of the East, as yet unborn.

III

But important and interesting as all this undoubtedly is, there is a phase of this matter which is farther-reaching in its world-significance than any yet mentioned. This is the matter of religion. Bishop Lightfoot said that Christianity appeared "at the confluence of three civilizations; the Roman gave it law, the Greek gave it culture, and the Jew gave it religion." This is a true statement of the case. And as the Jew's greatest contribution to humanity has been a religious contribution, so his significance to the world will always be chiefly religious. If there is ever a synthesis of the religions of the world, the Jew will be the maker of it, and through his influence and work it will become established! There is nothing about him that does not smack of his religious history and his natural alliance with religious ideas. Giving the world monotheism, as he did, he has been the natural expounder of

fundamental religion, and through this, of philosophy, and through philosophy an inevitable figure in literature and the arts. His religious foundation made these things as certain as the tides.

But one of the tragedies of the dispersion of the Jews has been the loss to many of them of their religious chart and compass. Nobody can have anything against the liberalizing of any race or nation, and its proper coördination with the remainder of the world's life. But the loss of religion to the Jew is an event of much greater importance than the loss of religion to a descendant of ancestors of the natural religions of the North. Religious genius is a Jewish national characteristic, which even the loss of its formal power and expression, in many cases, has not been able to destroy. A Jew is a symbol of religion, in this world of ours or he is nothing! Because, being a Jew, he is a religious symbol; failing that, he becomes literally a floating fragment, a derelict menace on the sea of humanity. It is this which makes the establishment of a Jewish state

an event of the greatest importance to all the world beside.

One of the first results of the establishment of a Jewish state will be the rehabilitation of the religion of Israel throughout the world. This is an end, desirable for the sake of the Jews themselves, but hardly less desirable for the rest of the world. A race so fertile, so capable, so fine in its best development, carries with it vast capacities for the reverse of all these things, when shorn of the source of its power. Samson, denuded of his crown of power, a mighty giant wasting in captivity, is not more pitiful than a son of Israel, mighty in intellect, superb in cultural skill and beauty, without the moral force and attractiveness, which is his natural heritage. Yet the dispersion has wrought this in many cases. Modern commercialism has laid its heavy hand upon many of its finest and best. Power without moral responsibility, and without conscience for the higher and nobler interests of humanity, is a tragedy for any race, but particularly for one, naturally gifted religiously, as the Jew is. And when to this is added

the fact that he cannot look about him, he cannot utter his family names, he cannot eat his food, take his bath, clothe himself, or indeed move a step in the ordinary course of his life, without facing statutes and principles which, whatever their present significance may be, have been in the past the steps of light and leading of his ancestors, his moral and spiritual isolation is pitiable in the extreme. The world has no home for him, but his own home. He cannot turn to the right or to the left without being faced with the duties that should be his, and must either feel the joys of their fulfilment or the qualms due to their nonfulfilment.

The Social Commonwealth of Israel will change all this. Not in a moment, to be sure, but steadily and surely. Israel will find itself and that portion of it which has lost the way will hear again the fresh utterance of the ancient law, "Hear, O Israel," will see before its eyes the blazing beacons that point toward the solidarity and unity of the ancient kindred. This will be a wonderful thing for Israel, but it will be not less wonderful for the rest of the world. Under the

influence of the religionizing of the Jew himself, there will also come an idealizing of his purposes which will be one of the most serviceable agencies for world happiness and culture imaginable. Under its influence the old antagonisms will disappear, the old prejudices will perish, the Jew will change, and the Gentile will see him once more in greatness and glory, as it views him through the words and deeds of his greatest prophets. The stupidity which, in one and the same breath, reverences the mighty heroes of righteousness of the Hebrew scriptures, and then visits contumely, ostracism, and other cruelties upon his kinsmen, will be manifest to the whole world, and will disappear because the sons of Israel have found a *locus standi* in the world, wherein without let or hindrance they are able to display, in their greatest beauty and radiance, those national traditions and idealisms which have made the politics of the Hebrew prophets an integral part of the Christian religion. What will not this mean for the moral and spiritual life of this world, torn with antagonisms, and hitherto without a sufficient moral cohesion

or balance to keep from ruthless slaughter, and the organization of nations for purposes of death and destruction! In the State of Palestine, Israel will become a prince once more and his capital a moral centre second to none on earth. Indeed, because of the rationalism of the Jew and his mental sanity, his capital may well become the clearing house of religious ideas, and "nations shall come to his light and kings to the brightness of his rising. His officers shall be Peace and his exactors Righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in his land, desolation or destruction within his borders." What the prophet, thus with glowing vision in the past, foresaw, that is now within the region of practical political possibility if a united religious impulse of the Jews of the world seeks it. And not they alone will be the beneficiaries of its realization. It shall shed its glory abroad far from its own land and Jerusalem is likely to become the Golden, indeed, to which the nations of the world may repair for wisdom and guidance in that art of righteousness which Israel through her most gifted sons has taught the world.

Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries

1 1012 01248 4905

Date Due